ECONOMIC LIFE

241 476 462 The burning and final clearing of the garden are done by the owner, usually aided by other members of his household. His wife and the other women of the house plant all the lesser crops, but the planting of manioc is done for each garden by all the people in the village, because this more extensive operation is well adapted to the labor of a large group. The men dig the holes for the planting of the manioc cuttings while the women gather and cut the stalks and drop the sections into the holes.

The harvesting of bitter manioc and its later processing is woman's work and constitutes their most arduous and time-consuming chore. Bitter manioc contains prussic acid 252 and is inedible until the poisonous substance is extracted through a complex series of operations. The final product takes the form of the *beijú*, a flat cake which is the traditional "bread" of the Mundurucú and other Amazonian Indians, and is also made into two varieties of farinha (flour).

Beijú manufacture is a slow process, and the cakes are made today as delicacies only. The tubers are carried from [462] the gardens in burden baskets by the women and unloaded on the floor of an open-sided shed in the middle of the village. This shed serves as the communal farinha "factory" of the entire community. The women peel the manioc with steel knives, using quick chopping motions, and then grate them into a large wooden trough. The [412] grater formerly consisted of a number of thorny roots of the *paxiuba* palm, halved and placed side by side to form a sort of scrub board. Today, the tubers are grated against [177] the sides of five-gallon gasoline cans which have been cut out and punctated with a nail. The wet, grated mass is then placed in the *tipití*, an ingenious basketry press native to South America, which operates on the principle of the Chinese finger squeezer. The tipití is suspended at

/11 cont./

*241 462 [912] The man digs or opens a hole in the ground (ikudn). He does this with a "digging stick," which consists of a strong rod, about 2 meters long, pointed at the lower end. The man pushes this rod hard into the ground, at an angle of 30 to 45 degrees, and then straightens it to a vertical position. This opens a small pit into which the woman who accompanies him puts two or at most three shoots of bitter manioc (8) (masok taisabm or masok ip maum). Removing the tip

[137] [244]

8. Maniva /bitter manioc/ is the name of the plant and the generic name of this vegetable (Manihot utilissima), while the roots, in the form of large tubercles, are called " mandioca." The bitter-manioc stalks, after the harvest, are saved for the next planting, when they are cut into pieces of 20 centimeters at most. These pieces, or " manioc shoots," are planted in the manner indicated above, for manioc does not propagate itself through seeds.

of the stick from the pit, she steps on /the pit/ to close it up and to pack the soil, but in such a way that the upper ends of the manioc shoots stick out in order to grow branches and leaves. Under the in- [177] fluence of civilization, nowadays the Mundurukú are already using spades and even iron digging tools. The distance between the manioc pits is approximately 1 meter on the average.

*241 There is no doubt that the Mundurukú carry out their horticultural work within a certain system, not only as regards the steps involved in clearing the plot but also in the planting itself. There is a sequence to the planting steps. In the time that elapses between the final burning and the planting, as a rule they sow watermelon, which thrives amazingly in the recently burned ground. Only then

/17 cont./
*241 which they were already cultivating, the introduction of new plants
177 /must have been/ all the more /uneven/. Here, the process may have been even slower.

262 Of even more recent acquisition, especially through the influence
137 of the Franciscan mission founded in 1911 on the Cururu River, are
177 products such as rice, beans, and various other plants which are
799 cultivated chiefly by the religious sisters, but which have been adopted by the Indians on a very modest scale. During the last decades, the following fruit trees have reached them: the mango tree, the orange tree, the lemon tree, the coffee shrub, and a certain type of cacao tree. They were already familiar with other products such as maize, pumpkins, etc., but cultivated them on a very small scale.

*241 8. Weeding or cleaning. We have described the planting. A few facts remain to be given concerning the garden tasks after planting. It is obvious that, once the planting itself has been done, the plot still requires a certain amount of care. Not right away, but after several weeks or months. /sic/ This is the weeding. Between the planting and the harvest, two weedings of the garden are usually carried out, the entire plot being cleaned. They speak of the first and second cleaning, or of the first and second weeding. This is done almost exclusively with the machete. There is no specific time set aside for this, because it depends to a large extent on the weather (rains) and on the need. The first weeding is called tip ogn, the second karit ogn.

244 9. The harvest. The Indians generally use the regional term, "tearing up the plot," or "pulling up the bitter-manioc roots"— masok ta ogn. Within a year, the garden has matured and may be torn up. The manioc roots are pulled up by hand. The entire plot is not harvested at one time, but according to need. In order to pull up the manioc roots, a certain amount of strength and ability is required. Often, when the tubercles hold firm to overly hard ground, [412] the Indian digs with the machete around the roots in order to loosen the soil and pull out the manioc root /18/ with greater ease. This same technique of using the machete as an auxiliary tool in the extraction of manioc roots is also used in gathering other tubercles, such as yams, sweet potatoes, etc.

*241 /30 cont./
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w — as in English.
ü — as in German, but shorter.
c — as the German umlauted "o," but shorter.
r — always dental.
s — always strong.
z — always weak.
Final consonants (as: k - p - t)
are not plosive.
The tonic accent, unless otherwise
noted, is always on the last syllable.

*241
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a) Tools:

[412] spade — puruze
iron digging tool — chit
digging stick — ip mararairarab ip

b) Garden and garden tasks:

garden (while under the man's care);
he says: — kat
garden (while under the woman's care);
she says: — ko
to clear the undergrowth — tyup tatabm
to fell (the tree:) — yup chign; yup chichign
to burn — imapign
brush — taipa
to pile up the brush — taipa chign; taipa chichign
to burn the brush — taipa mapign
to plant (bitter manioc) — (mazok) tatabm; (mazok) ip maum
to weed, first cleaning — tip ogn
to weed, second cleaning — karit ogn
to pull up the manioc roots — mazok ta ogn
to replant — warabm ypu maum; yab; kuon